

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 are pending, claims 14-17 are allowed, claims 3-6 and 10-13 are objected to, and claims 1, 2, 7-9 are rejected in this application. Claims 1, 4, 5 and 10 are amended, and claim 3 is canceled hereby.

Responsive to the Examiner's objection to the drawings, Applicants have amended Fig. 1, keeping the Examiner's suggestion in mind by adding reference numbers to refer to a first end and second end of the assembly. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the amended drawings are now in allowable form.

Responsive to the Examiner's objection to the specification, Applicants have amended the specification and submit that the specification is now in allowable form.

Responsive to the Examiner's objection to claims 3 and 10-13, Applicants have cancelled claim 3 and amended claim 10. Claim 10 has been amended to incorporate the Examiner's suggestion. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 10-13 are now in condition for allowance, which is hereby respectfully requested.

Responsive to the Examiner's rejection of claims 1, 2 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,565,652 (Frye), Applicants have amended claim 1 to include the limitations of claim 3, which the Examiner has indicated would have been allowable if placed in independent form. Applicants action, of amending claim 1 to incorporate the limitation of objected to claim 3, serves to place claims 1, 2 and 7 in condition for allowance, which is hereby respectfully requested.

Claims 8 and 9 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Frye. However, claims 8 and 9 depend from claim 1, and claim 1 has been placed in condition for

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allowance for the reasons given above. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 8 and 9 are now in condition for allowance, which is hereby respectfully requested.

Responsive to the Examiner's indication that claims 3-6 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, Applicants have amended claim 1 to incorporate the limitations of claim 3 thereby placing claims 1, 2 and 7-9 in condition for allowance. Further, Applicants have amended claims 4 and 5 placing them in independent form by incorporating base claim 1 therein. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 4-6 are now in condition for allowance, which is hereby respectfully requested.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 14-17 are allowed for which the Applicants thank the Examiner.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that no combination of the cited references teaches, discloses or suggests the subject matter of the amended claims. The pending claims are therefore in condition for allowance, and Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of all rejections and allowance of the claims.

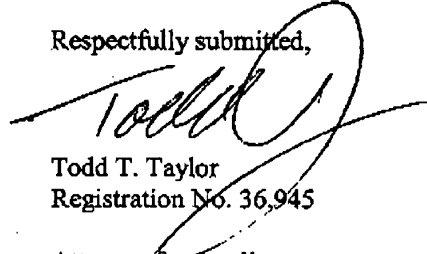
In the event Applicants have overlooked the need for an extension of time, an additional extension of time, payment of fee, or additional payment of fee, Applicants hereby conditionally petition therefor and authorizes that any charges be made to Deposit Account No. 20-0095, TAYLOR & AUST, P.C.

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Should any question concerning any of the foregoing arise, the Examiner is invited to
telephone the undersigned at (260) 897-3400.

Respectfully submitted,



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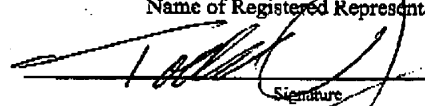
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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted via facsimile
to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, on: April 27, 2004.

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Name of Registered Representative



Signature

April 27, 2004

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